



MEAP

Coordinator Update

Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability – Michigan Educational Assessment Program – Vol. 2, No. 12 – May 31, 2005

Applications for Content Advisory and Bias/Sensitivity Committee Memberships Posted to MEAP Web Page

Application forms have been posted to the MEAP web page at <http://www.michigan.gov/meap> as part of the efforts of the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability (OEAA) to recruit educators with classroom experience in the areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies at the elementary, middle and high school levels to serve on Content Advisory and Bias/Sensitivity Review Committees. There is a modest compensation for those who are selected to serve in these important capacities. *The deadline for applications has been extended to June 30, 2005.*

OEAA actively seeks the input and feedback of a variety of constituents in developing and implementing assessment and accountability systems to further the educational goal of improving what students know and can do in relation to the Michigan Curriculum Framework (MCF). All committees utilize structured and nationally recognized processes to ensure that the advice provided is clear, well documented, and efficiently obtained. We value the time and expertise of the committee members, train them to accomplish their work, and provide modest compensation to them or their employers. Below is a brief description of these key committees, their purpose, and characteristics of members.

Content Advisory Committees (CAC)

Purpose: These committees are charged with reviewing assessment items and making key decisions to ensure that the content of items and assessments measure important elements of the MCF in each subject, that items are clearly worded for the students being assessed, have a single best answer, and are factually consistent with the best knowledge in the field. This is an advisory committee. Based on the advice of these committees and other key information, OEAA will accept test items for use, drop items from further consideration, or revise items.

Member Characteristics: Separate CACs are needed for each subject tested and student age or grade span. Most CAC members must be very familiar with the subject, the related MCF, standards, benchmarks and expectations, and hold detailed knowledge of the students being assessed. Additional members are needed who have more in-depth content expertise, such as a mathematician for the mathematics CAC, and who can provide expertise in child development and education. The majority of CAC members must be current teacher experts at the grade and subject tested.

Bias/Sensitivity Committees (BSC)

Purpose: The charge of these committees is to review assessment items and make key decisions to ensure that no student group receives an unfair advantage or disadvantage on any assessments. There is one BSC for each content area, spanning K-12. This is also an advisory committee. Based on the advice of these committees and other key information, OEAA will accept test items for use, drop items from further consideration, or revise items.

Member Characteristics: Separate BSCs are needed for each subject tested, e.g. MEAP English language arts, science, mathematics, and social studies, and for review of other major decisions such as when setting performance level standards. The members of these committees should represent the breadth of the diversity of the state of Michigan so that many perspectives can be represented when making decisions that are in the best interest of Michigan students.

Item Development Team (IDT) Meeting Dates

The IDT meeting dates have been finalized and are listed below and on the MEAP web page at www.michigan.gov/meap.

Dates for the initial training sessions are:

- English Language Arts – June 22 – 24
- Mathematics – June 28 – 30
- Science – June 22 – 24
- Social Studies – June 28 – 30

The second three-day sessions are:

- English Language Arts – August 16 – 18
- Mathematics – August 9 – 11
- Science – August 16 – 18
- Social Studies – August 9 – 11

If you have any questions, please contact Bill Brown at brownbill@michigan.gov.

Item Development Teams to Earn Continuing Education Units

Members of the MEAP IDTs will earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the training they receive this summer. More details of this benefit will be given to team members during the June training sessions.

Scoring the MEAP Writing Assessments

We have received many questions and expressions of concern about the MEAP writing test scores and the scoring process. Each year, MEAP releases preliminary results for district staff members to review. This preliminary review is very helpful in allowing districts to see and raise questions about their scores before they are officially released to the public.

Scoring can appear to be very inconsistent and mysterious to those who have never been through a similar training experience. That is why there has been a very rigorous process for the scoring of the writing tests since the first tests were implemented statewide in Michigan in 1996.

Since 1996, the first step in the MEAP scoring process has been range finding. This process involves a committee of Michigan teachers, a representative from the MEAP Office and a representative from the scoring contractor. The scoring contractor's representative brings approximately 125 actual Michigan student responses for range finding. The papers come from different districts and should represent a range of

achievement and approaches to the prompt or topic. The committee members score every paper individually. Then, the committee discusses each paper and comes to consensus on the score for that paper. The state scoring rubric is referred to constantly. This is usually a three-day process which occurs separately for each grade and each prompt.

The contractor's representative takes all range finding papers back to the scoring center and uses them to make up a scoring guide that has to be approved by a MEAP staff member before it is used. The guides for several years of writing tests are available on the MEAP website. The scoring guides are made up of some papers from every score point and are chosen to show a range of papers representing each score. For example, there should be a low four paper in the guide, as well as a high four paper. We also try to include different kinds of papers to show educators that all papers do NOT have to follow a certain format. After the first year of a new test, we always refer back to the previous year's guide to anchor current scores to the previous year's scores.

The scoring guides are used to train all scorers. The rest of the range finding papers are used as additional training and qualifying sets, as well as for “pop quizzes,” or validity check papers, throughout the scoring process. Before a scorer can score any papers, he/she must have a college degree, and must go through a process similar to range finding in which individual scoring is practiced and discussion occurs. At the end of training, scorers must qualify using sets of the range finding papers. They must demonstrate they can score consistently the same way the committee of Michigan teachers did, using the state rubric and guide - not the way they individually grade papers in their own classrooms. During the scoring process, the scoring contractor and the MEAP staff monitor the consistency of the scorers as well. Throughout all of these activities, scorers are referring back to the same scoring guides and rubrics. They are all trained in one place with the same papers and the same process.

Sometimes, MEAP staff members get questions about writing scores because they do not match what the classroom teacher sees a student producing on a daily basis. During the scoring process, scorers do not have any information about the classroom achievement or instructional programs of individual students whose responses are being scored. For example, scorers do not know who is gifted and talented and who is receiving special education services. It is quite possible that a gifted and talented student will write a response on demand, or during a statewide test, that is not as focused or as developed as one written by a student with disabilities. In this case, the results may not correlate well with the observations of the classroom teacher. As a matter of fairness, MEAP can only give scores based on what has actually been written, without the benefit of other information. Otherwise, the tests would lack validity.

Freedom to Learn Project - Online MEAP Assessments

The Online MEAP project will have 2,606 students participating by taking the MEAP 6th Grade Social Studies and English Language Arts Exams online. This pilot project is sponsored by invitation of the Freedom to Learn (FTL) project at Ferris State University and the volunteer enrollment period has been closed. The MEAP office is assisting FTL and will be evaluating the project. MEAP Coordinators of schools in the project will be sent information for participation. Any questions can be directed to Dr. Paul Stemmer at stemmerp@michigan.gov.

2005 Michigan School Report Card – School Self Assessment

The Michigan School Report Card provides data on both the state accreditation system, Education YES! and on the federal requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act. Data

collection for the School Self Assessment is the first step in the 2005 Michigan School Report Card process. Authorized users at each school log on to the MI-Plan web site to edit the information submitted last year. If you need help with a technical issue regarding the MI-Plan application, including resetting your password, please contact the DIT Education Help Desk at Help-Desk@michigan.gov or 517-335-0505. Please provide your name, telephone number, and fax number (with area code), e-mail address, district code, and district name. The data collection window closed **May 23**.

If you have questions about the Michigan School Report Card, please contact Paul Bielawski in the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability at bielawp@michigan.gov or (517) 335-5784, or contact Linda Howley in the Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability at howlelyl@michigan.gov or (517) 241-2884.

OEAA Welcomes New Staff members

The OEAA welcomes three new staff members: **Dr. Vincent Dean**, Education Research Consultant for Assessment for Students with Disabilities Program, **Ms. Linda Howley**, Department Analyst for Accountability, and **Dr. Paul Stemmer**, NAEP State Coordinator.

Dr. Vincent Dean has a B.A. in Psychology and an M.A. and S.Psy.S. in School Psychology from Central Michigan University, plus a Ph.D. in K-12 Administration with a focus on Special Education from Michigan State University. Dr. Dean comes to the OEAA from Holt Public Schools, where he worked as a school psychologist for four years.

Ms. Linda Howley has a B.Sc. in Child Development and Elementary Education from Michigan State University, and a M.A. in Child Development, also from MSU. Before taking this position with MDE, Linda served as a Scoring Director with Pearson Educational Measurement. She was responsible for all aspects of the scoring process: range finding, building training sets, training scorers, and monitoring the project.

Linda is married to Tim and has two daughters; Kristen, a student at MSU, and Lindsey, a junior in high school. She enjoys reading, cooking, and beading.

Dr. Paul Stemmer has a B.S. in Psychology from the University of Michigan, a Sp.A. in School Psychology from Eastern Michigan University and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Michigan with specialization in measurement and evaluation and computer applications in education. He co-authored a 1991 book, *Microcomputers in Social Science Research*.

Paul comes back to us most recently from Michigan Virtual University where he was Director of Research for the Leading the Future project that was part of Michigan Virtual University. Some of you may remember him from his previous service with the MEAP Office as an Educational Research Consultant (1988-91), where he worked with Bill Brown on the Employability Skills Project and on the MEAP science tests. Paul is also a past president of the Michigan Educational Research Association.

Paul's wife Karen is a Cardiology Nurse Practitioner specializing in a telemanagement practice at the VA Ann Arbor Health System. They have two sons, Ryan and Eric - Eric is in college and Ryan is graduating from high school this year. Paul likes to play tennis when he gets a chance and he's not fiddling with computers - especially Apples (though Apples require only fun fiddling).

Winter 2005 MEAP Reports

Shipping is now complete for the winter 2005 reports. All reports should be in districts by May 27, 2005. If you haven't received your reports, contact Measurement Incorporated at 1-877-683-6883 or email Michigan@measinc.com. The Winter 2005 Guide to Reports has been posted to the MEAP web page at www.michigan.gov/meap under *MEAP Test Results*.

Winter 2005 Appeal Request Forms Available Online

Parents/guardians who believe an error has been made in scoring or in reporting their son's or daughter's test results may request that an appeal be made. An appeal must be made through the local school office. Appeal request forms for grades 7 and 8 assessments administered during the winter 2005 cycle (the appeals process is currently not available for assessment in grades 4 or 5) must be postmarked on or before July 29, 2005. A separate form must be completed for each subject being appealed. The appeal form is available on the MEAP web page at www.michigan.gov/meap under *Information for Students and Parents* and *Information for Educators*.

Spring 2005 MEAP Reports

The MEAP Reports for Spring 2005 are currently on schedule. PDF reports are due to be posted on the OEAA secure web site (www.michigan.gov/meap-secure) on June 13, 2005. Reports are to be printed and shipped on June 15, with the last of the reports due to arrive in districts by June 22, 2005.

MEAP Contact Information

MEAP email address: meap@michigan.gov

MEAP web site: www.michigan.gov/meap

MEAP Office local phone number: 517-373-8393

MEAP Office toll-free phone number: 877-560-8378

MEAP Office fax number: 517-335-1186

OEAA web site: www.michigan.gov/oeaa

OEAA secure database: www.michigan.gov/meap-secure